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THE SITUATION IN CENTRAL AMERICA: PROCEDURES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A FIRM AND LASTING PEACE AND PROGRESS IN FASHIONING A REGION OF PEACE, FREEDOM, DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT

Letter dated 2 May 1997 from the Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw your attention to the statement by the Presidency of the European Union on the elections in El Salvador, issued on 30 April 1997.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the fifty-first session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 40.

(Signed) N. H. BIEGMAN
Permanent Representative of the
Netherlands to the United Nations

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ANNEX

[Original: English and French]

Statement by the Presidency of the European Union concerning the elections in El Salvador, issued on 30 April 1997

The European Union welcomes the parliamentary and local elections held in El Salvador on 16 March 1997, which mark a further step forward in the consolidation of democracy and the peace process begun with the 1992 agreements. The Union also congratulates the members of the new parliament and wishes them every success in their work.

Thanks to the civic spirit of the Salvadorian people, polling day passed in a calm, orderly manner. The national civilian police contributed with their professionalism to ensuring that voting was free of incident and without any serious irregularity. The electoral supreme court organized the counting of votes and the announcement of results fairly and openly.

The problems arising from shortcomings in the compiling of the electoral register, the distribution of polling stations and the system of composition and operation of the electoral supreme court, which partly explain the high abstention rate, highlight once again the need to go through with the electoral reforms in hand, as pointed out by the United Nations Secretary-General's representative on his latest visit to El Salvador. The European Union is therefore pleased to note the President's comments regarding the need to complete those reforms so that they are ready by the time of the 1999 presidential elections.

The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, the associated country Cyprus and the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this declaration.